USEUCOM
Deployment
& Community Counseling Support
Conference

Conference Outbrief

08 June 2007

Deployment Support Focus Group 1
Services and Needs for Adults

Spokesperson:

Mike Adams

Issue Title

To prevent caregiver burnout, EUCOM leadership needs to create and implement a comprehensive Compassion Fatigue Program (CFP)

Issue Description

- Caregivers are at high risk for burnout physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually
- Currently, there is insufficient dedicated funding for caregiver programs

"Regular exposure to trauma and terrible knowledge about life can deeply affect staff's emotional, behavioral, and spiritual well-being in painful and unsettling ways. Although general work stress is frustrating, secondary traumatic stress can, over time, change people forever"

Dr. Roger Friedman, Ph.D. U of M, School of Social Work

Recommendations

- Create a EUCOM theater-level joint working group
- Create, resource, and implement a permanent Compassion Fatigue Program (CFP)
- CFP should be implemented throughout the three phases of deployment
- Ensure CFP includes caregiver retreats, training, availability of adequate professional expertise, retention incentives for professionals, marketing, and regular work schedules
- Study and build CFP based on civilian and military compassion fatigue research and programs (Post 9/11 literature)
- Include CFP training in Command and NCO professional development courses
- Conduct an annual review of existing manning requirements and fill rates
- Require periodic (i.e. annual) mental health assessment
- Develop a marketing plan that gains leadership and caregiver buy-in
- Submit results to OSD as a best practice with a recommendation for DOD-wide implementation

Issue Title_

Develop and implement a mandatory comprehensive Family Deployment

Support Program (FDSP)

Issue Description

- EUCOM Family Members lack a comprehensive FDSP
- Proper leadership emphasis on family deployment support programs
- Units throughout the theater have inconsistent FDSP
- Low participation in existing programs

Recommendations

- EUCOM Commanders emphasize and resource a Family Development Support Program (FDSP)
- Create FDSP through a joint working group
  - Members of joint working group include subject matter experts from military, civilian, and public sector
- Multi-pronged approach in reaching families and increasing participation:
  - Energized leadership holding unit level Commanders accountable
  - Creative incentives
  - Extensive marketing
  - Intrusive leadership approach
- Joint working group to create a template for a comprehensive Family plan
- Recommend reviewing and sharing best practices
  - Task Force Guardian (2nd Brigade Combat Team, Schweinfurt, Germany)

Deployment Support Focus
Group 2
Services and Needs for Children

Spokesperson:

Sue Williams

Issue Title

Provide and/or increase availability of emotional support, intervention and/or counseling services for all children in communities affected by the deployment cycle

Issue Description

- Children are adversely affected by the deployment cycle
- Availability of services and manpower do not adequately address emotional needs of military children throughout the deployment cycle

Recommendations

- Increase manpower and funding to address the emotional needs of military children
  - Clinics
  - Child and Youth Services
  - Family Support Centers
  - Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS)
- Increase awareness and education associated with the emotional impact of deployment on children
- Increase collaborative crosstalk within existing networks

Issue Title

Develop and fund deployment readiness activities for children of individuals in the deployment cycle

Issue Description

- Increased OPSTEMPO since 9/11
- Quality deployment readiness activities for children have not evolved with increased demands
- Programs not readily available and/or under funded

Recommendations

- Fully fund deployment readiness activities through appropriated funds, non appropriated funds, and corporate sponsorship
- Relax restrictions to enable increased corporate sponsorship
- Identify an office of primary responsibility for program oversight
- Collaborate with community helping agencies to develop and implement outcome-based programs and activities

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Deployment Support Focus
Group 3
Policies and Processes

Spokesperson:

Linda Curtis

Issue Title

Restrictions on Use of Family Readiness Funds

Issue Description

- Current funding regulations limit service component abilities to access and spend funds in support of Family Readiness Programs at all levels of operations
  - Appropriated Fund Restrictions
    - O&M limitations do not allow funds to be spent on items necessary to accomplish effective information fairs, deployment prep and other family readiness and reintegration activities. Restricted items include food, promotion items, rental fees, paper products, recognition, etc.
  - Informal Funds Restrictions (i.e., booster club funds, cup & flower funds)
    - Amount that can be raised/balance of account (current limit of $5000 is inadequate)

Recommendations

- Allow for waiver of O&M funds purchasing restrictions to accommodate family readiness program needs

- If O&M fund restrictions are not lifted, allocate nonappropriated funds to family readiness activities

- Provide legal avenues to maintain an informal fund average balance of $15,000

Issue Title

Permanent Manpower Billets to Support Family Readiness

Issue Description

- No permanent dedicated billets are in place to support deployed, TDY, or TAD service members and their family members regardless of their location
  - Army - Rear detachment structure is taken out of current unit manning
  - Navy - Active duty family readiness position is an additional duty
  - Air Force - Unit deployment manager is an additional duty and focuses only on service member deployment support
  - Marines - Family readiness officer is an additional duty

Recommendations

- Create permanent manpower billets to support family readiness
- Require training on topics such as family-oriented support agencies, reintegration, finance, legal, and family readiness programs
- Require integrated training among the desired billets and family readiness volunteers/installation agencies

Closing Remarks

MajGen Catto
EUCOM Chief of Staff